

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 117307
ORIGIN EB-07

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R 210119Z MAY 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:EAGR, CR

SUBJECT: 1977 MEAT IMPORT PROGRAM: CONSULTATIONS

1. IMPORTS FROM COSTA RICA ARE RAPIDLY APPROACHING THE
RESTRAINT ALLOCATION. FOR THIS REASON EMBASSY IS REQUESTED
TO CONSULT WITH APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS WITHIN THE COSTA RICAN
GOVERNMENT, AS PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 7 OF THE 1977 RESTRAINT
AGREEMENT ON MEAT, CONCERNING IMPLEMENTATION OF THAT
AGREEMENT AND TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) WE VALUE COSTA RICA AS A RELIABLE SUPPLIER OF
MEAT TO THE US MARKET.

(B) FOR THIS REASON WE WERE EAGER TO CONCLUDE AN
AGREEMENT WITH COSTA RICA FOR 1977 WHICH WOULD PERMIT A
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PAGE 02 STATE 117307

LEVEL OF OVERALL IMPORTS NEARLY 10 PERCENT HIGHER THAN THE
LEVEL THAT WOULD BE PERMITTED UNDER A MANDATORY QUOTA IN
THE ABSENCE OF A RESTRAINT PROGRAM.

(C) AS OF MAY 7 IMPORTS OF MEAT FROM COSTA RICA HAD
REACHED 40.375 MILLION POUNDS, OR 72.6 PERCENT OF COSTA
RICA'S RESTRAINT LEVEL OF 55.6 MILLION POUNDS.

(D) IF IMPORTS FROM COSTA RICA WERE TO CONTINUE AT THE AVERAGE WEEKLY RATE RECORDED DURING THE PERIOD MARCH 1 TO MAY 7, COSTA RICA'S RESTRAINT LEVEL WOULD BE REACHED BY THE FIRST WEEK OF JULY.

(E) THEREFORE, WE HOPE COSTA RICA WILL TAKE STEPS TO REGULATE SHIPMENTS IN A MANNER TO PREVENT THE COSTA RICAN RESTRAINT LEVEL FROM BEING REACHED BEFORE THE END OF THIS YEAR.

(F) FOR OUR PART, WE WILL CONTINUE CLOSELY MONITORING THE SITUATION AND IF NECESSARY, WE WILL ISSUE REGULATIONS TO PREVENT US IMPORTS FROM COSTA RICA FROM EXCEEDING 55.6 MILLION POUNDS DURING 1977. THESE REGULATIONS WILL IN NO WAY ALTER THE RESTRAINT LEVEL SPECIFIED IN THE AGREEMENT WE HAVE CONCLUDED WITH COSTA RICA.

(G) CURRENT SHIPPING RATES FROM ALL PARTICIPANTS INDICATE THAT WE CANNOT EXPECT A REALLOCATABLE SHORTFALL THIS YEAR.

(H) WE HAVE EXAMINED THE POSSIBILITY OF AN INCREASE IN THE ALLOWABLE LEVEL OF IMPORTS FOR 1977 AND FIND THAT SUCH AN INCREASE IS NOT POSSIBLE IN LIGHT OF THE PROVISIONS CONTAINED WITHIN THE MEAT IMPORT ACT WHICH SET SPECIFIC CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE PRESIDENT MAY INCREASE THE ALLOWABLE LEVEL OF IMPORTS, AND BECAUSE OF THE CONTINUED DEPRESSED STATE OF THE DOMESTIC CATTLE INDUSTRY. CHRISTOPHER

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